

Auckland Regional Public Health Service

Rātonga Hauora ā Iwi o Tamaki Makaurau



Working with the people of Auckland, Waitemata and Counties Manukau

Auckland Regional Public Health Service

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Submission on Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project

1. Thank you for the opportunity for the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) to provide a submission to the Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project.
2. The following submission represents the views of ARPHS and does not necessarily reflect the views of the three District Health Boards it serves. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for more information on ARPHS.
3. The primary contact point for this submission is:

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jane McEntee".

Jane McEntee
General Manager
Auckland Regional Public Health Service

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Hale".

Dr Michael Hale
Medical Officer of Health
Auckland Regional Public Health Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4. Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) strongly supports the Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project. This project is an important component in the further development of the Auckland Cycle Network.
5. We agree that safe cycling and walking paths in the areas of Point Chevalier to the city are essential to increase the use of active transport modes and to increase choice and accessibility for people not using cars.
6. We recommend the use of off road cycle ways or cycle paths separated from vehicle traffic to enhance safety, confidence and use.

Introduction

7. ARPHS is Auckland's regulatory public health agency serving Auckland's diverse populations through health protection, prevention and promotion.
8. ARPHS appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project.
9. ARPHS's interest in the Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project is because of the connections between active transport (such as cycling and walking) to improved public health outcomes. The contribution of active transport to public health is evident in World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines that emphasise the importance of prioritising active methods of transportation.¹
10. ARPHS supports these proposed improvements as an integral component of a joined up cycle network to increase safe, accessible and healthy transport choices throughout Auckland.
11. The Auckland cycle network is a key component within an integrated network of active transport modes and public transport. A well connected and multimodal transport network provides real transport choices for Aucklanders. It assists in improving public health outcomes for Auckland people through promoting increased physical activity, increased social connectivity, and reducing air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions.
12. ARPHS's support for active modes of transport within the Auckland region can be summarised as follows:

¹ The World Health Organization. 'The Solid Facts.' Accessed from: http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/98438/e81384.pdf

- Physical activity such as walking and cycling can protect against obesity and cardiovascular disease.² Evidence suggests that active transportation and changes in urban design can lead to changes in how people commute and are an effective way of combating obesity in developed countries.³
- Increasing active transport options contributes to Auckland Plan targets which place strong emphasis on increasing levels of physical activity.
- Cycling and walking have the potential to reduce motorised transport congestion, lower energy use and environmental impact, improve access to community facilities, improve health and fitness, and are affordable forms of transport that promote social inclusion.
- To remove the danger associated with vehicles passing cyclists on a carriageway with a narrow shoulder, we advocate for a comprehensive linked network of continuous cycle lanes that are off road and separated from vehicle transportation paths in order to protect cyclists.
- Design of shared cycle/pedestrian paths should ensure clear visual and physical cues to demarcate and differentiate pedestrian and cyclist interactions.

Support for the proposed Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project.

13. We support the proposed Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements especially any routes that will support high concentrations of vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists, such as routes associated with schools and public amenity areas.
14. While we acknowledge these connections are still being investigated, as well as subject to community feedback and the final configuration of the wider local cycling and walking network, we consider the following outcomes should be a primary consideration:

² Joyner, Michael J. and Daniel J. Green, Exercise Protects the Cardiovascular System: Effects Beyond Traditional Risk Factors, *Physiol* (2009) pp 5551–5558.

³ Built environment, physical activity, and obesity: What have we learned from reviewing the literature? Authors: Ding Dinga, Klaus Gebelc. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1353829211001614>

- Safe cycling and walking paths should link to existing (and any proposed) bus routes.
 - Improved cyclist and pedestrian safety.
 - The adequacy of cycle park facilities at key locations should also be reviewed in light of this greater connectivity.
15. Electric bikes are rapidly becoming more available and affordable.⁴ Increasing use of electric bicycles creates considerable scope to increase the estimate of the average distance people are happy to ride. Providing it is made safe, people in Pt Chevalier, for example, may be able to cycle to and from work, educational institutions and recreational areas in the city.
16. Where cyclists need to travel on roads, it is appropriate to give high priority to cyclists. Auckland Transport's Integrated Transport Assessment guidelines provide: "Local traffic management measures such as road narrowing, tightened intersection corners, chicanes, raised table pedestrian crossing points and material differentiation should be applied to limit the speed of vehicles on local roads to enhance safety, movement and amenity for pedestrians and cyclists."⁵
17. Cyclists need road and path surfaces to be relatively free of debris. Otherwise cyclists swerve into potential conflict with vehicles.⁶⁷ Cyclist's needs are more exacting than those of car, truck and bus drivers. Roads which are expected to provide for cyclists need to have a more frequent road sweeping service. As a result, Auckland Transport may need to vary contract specifications for this service. Experience in other parts of Auckland where cyclists are using roads with a lot of traffic debris and / or a lot of leaf drop from trees is that road litter can make the difference between cycling feeling safe, and not safe.⁸
18. Providing off road cycle and walking paths creates safe options for active transportation users, by removing them from the road transportation system.

⁴ See for example <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/festival-of-business/11440527/Charging-ahead-the-electric-bike-revolution-has-arrived-in-Britain.html>

⁵ Auckland Transport, Integrated Transport Assessment Guidelines-January-2015.pdf

⁶ Minimum design parameters for cycle connectivity June 2012 Darren Walton and Stephen J. Murray NZ Transport Agency research report 432

⁷ Balancing the needs of cyclists and motorists D. Walton, V.K. Dravitzki, B.S. Cleland, J.A. Thomas and R. Jackett, Land Transport New Zealand Research Report No. 273 p 52

⁸ See for example Greenlane West narrow onroad cycleway as it passes under trees at Cornwall Park.

This reduces the likelihood (for cyclists in particular) that they could be hit by vehicles, for example, by a car door opening when passing.

19. We suggest that the Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project favour methods of providing off road cycle paths, separated from vehicle transportation paths. We further recommend that off road cycle ways be prioritised as forms of access to the many local schools.
20. This project is an important component within the wider Auckland Cycle Network. Effective cycling infrastructure needs a coordinated, connected network, enabling safe riding throughout the trip.

CONCLUSION

21. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the Point Chevalier to city cycle improvements project.
22. In addition to this written submission, we would be happy to meet and discuss any other transport initiatives that Auckland Transport are investigating where it considers ARPHS may have a particular interest, or be able to provide some assistance.

Appendix 1 - Auckland Regional Public Health Service

Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) provides public health services for the three district health boards (DHBs) in the Auckland region (Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitemata District Health Boards).

ARPHS has a statutory obligation under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities in the Auckland region. The Medical Officer of Health has an enforcement and regulatory role under the Health Act 1956 and other legislative designations to protect the health of the community.

ARPHS' primary role is to improve population health. It actively seeks to influence any initiatives or proposals that may affect population health in the Auckland region to maximise their positive impact and minimise possible negative effects on population health.

The Auckland region faces a number of public health challenges through changing demographics, increasingly diverse communities, increasing incidence of lifestyle-related health conditions such as obesity and type 2 diabetes, infrastructure requirements, the balancing of transport needs, and the reconciliation of urban design and urban intensification issues.